

People cook up stories to split Umno, warns Najib

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By Alyaa Azhar

Umno president Najib Abdul Razak tonight said quarters who spread slander against Umno do not love the party.

His remarks at Umno's 69th anniversary dinner comes after former Information Minister Zainuddin Maidin claimed that Umno leaders will "politely" ask Najib to step down at the supreme council meeting today.

"There are all kinds of stories made by those who want to see us split, pitting us against one another.

"They also poison the minds of leaders, making us restless. Those people do not love Umno," the prime minister said.

His remarks also come in the wake of incessant attacks by former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad (photo), who said Najib will lead BN to defeat in the 14th general election.

Mahathir also claimed that Najib does not have party grassroots support, and he is attacking Najib for the love of Umno.

Former de facto Law Minister Zaid Ibrahim also claimed Umno sources told him Muhyiddin was plotting a coup against him, along with two other Umno supreme council members.

Despite the allegations, Najib after the council meeting jubilantly said he and his deputy, Muhyiddin Yassin, has the council's full support.

'Hidup Najib!'

In his speech, Najib said that he, too, wishes that he and Muhyiddin will continue to lead Umno.

"If we have leaders who trust each other then this is a clear signal that the supporters will likewise do the same," he said.

His speech was on occasion peppered with cries of 'Hidup Najib' by individuals attending the dinner, while a rousing poem on Umno was read before that.

Najib said that the party was more important than individuals.

"We are not important, Umno is more important. Leaders come and go. If the party is still strong, the (party)'s struggle can be continued.

"When I say strong, (I mean) we must have power. There is no meaning if we are a party without power," he said, urging everyone in the party to keep the party strong.

The party has experienced numerous trials and tribulations, he said, citing incidents when a bureau in Umno left the party to form PAS and when Umno was deregistered as a party.

"But we went through it all successfully. When a leader has strong supporters, he can succeed," he said.

Confident that such a formula is still relevant today, Najib said the only difference is the surroundings.

"The world today tests our way of doing things. For example, slander is made on social media...Perception is more important than the reality.

"But whatever changes that have happened, Umno is still able to adapt to become a relevant party today," he said.

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